

VZCZCXYZ0003
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHLP #0270 0501456
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 191456Z FEB 09
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0033
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION IMMEDIATE 8818
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE 6195
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE 0158
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES IMMEDIATE 7379
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE 4426
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN IMMEDIATE 0387
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA IMMEDIATE 4759
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO IMMEDIATE 6153
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO IMMEDIATE 7043
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO IMMEDIATE 1807
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 0408
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA IMMEDIATE 1681
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0226
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHMFSS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 000270

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/18/2019
TAGS: PREL PGOV PINR BL
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT OF BOLIVIAN CONGRESS'S FOREIGN RELATIONS
COMMITTEE CALLS ON CHARGE

REF: LA PAZ 194

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Krishna Urs for reason 1.4 b
and d.

¶1. (C) In a February 18 call on the Charge d'Affaires, President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies (lower house of congress) Michiatki Nagatani portrayed himself as a personal messenger from Minister of Foreign Affairs David Choquehuanca. He said Choquehuanca had asked him to intervene, knowing he has a good relationship with the Embassy, but also warned him not to discuss his mission with anyone else in the MFA, saying there were groups within the organization loyal to other ministers and no one could be trusted. (Comment: Nagatani is from the MNR, former president Sanchez de Lozada's party, and is a native of Santa Cruz. He might seem an unlikely emissary from the Morales government, but in fact he does have a good working relationship with Choquehuanca. End comment) Nagatani's message was that Choquehuanca wants to improve relations with the U.S., but does not know how to go about it.

¶2. (C) The Charge assured Nagatani that the U.S. had received the message that the GOB was interested in improved bilateral relations through various channels, and we also wanted an improved bilateral relationship. However, at the same time the U.S. was receiving other, usually public, messages from President Morales and other government ministers, who continued to baselessly accuse the Embassy of conspiring to undermine the government. He explained the expulsion of Ambassador Goldberg and the DEA were serious actions and that it would take time to rebuild the relationship.

¶3. (C) The Charge urged Nagatani to take back the message that the Morales government should think about its vision for the future relationship. Only when the U.S. understands what Bolivia wants can we identify common interests. We understand that Choquehuanca has good intentions, but there are other forces in the government with different priorities.

¶4. (C) Nagatani is travelling to Asia February 20 to March

¶16. He promised to work on this issue upon his return. He lamented that Choquehuanca is the administration's "fireman" trying to repair the damage that President Morales and other ministers have done. Nagatani claimed that the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee President Guido Guardia (a MAS dissident from Santa Cruz) and the Vice-President of his own Committee, David Herrada (MAS-Cochabamba), were committed to working with the MFA and with President Morales himself to help improve the bilateral relationship.

¶15. (C) Comment: Nagatani's visit is the latest in a series of extended olive branches, including the Charge's February 3 meeting with Chamber of Deputies President Edmundo Novillo (MAS--reftel) and A/S Shannon's February 13 meeting with Pablo Solon. (Nagatani discredited Solon as a person who puts his own interests above Bolivian national interests, and who had muddled negotiations with the European Union.) Nagatani's visit represents another sign that the GOB, or at least certain elements in it, are interested in seeing improved relations with us, though they are not sure how to achieve them. End Comment.

URS